



State of New Jersey

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Highlands Council Co-Sponsors Downtown Revitalization Institute

Chester, NJ- The New Jersey Highlands Council is joining with the Department of Community Affairs and the Office of Smart Growth to sponsor Main Street New Jersey's eighth annual Downtown Revitalization Institute. This sponsorship will provide scholarships for municipal officials and local business entities in the Highlands Region to attend the Downtown Revitalization Institute's seminars throughout the year.

"The Council believes that offering this opportunity to Highlands Municipalities will help towns determine the best source of commerce and economic engines they need in their downtowns," said Highlands Council Chairman John Weingart. "Further, by locating the economic stimulus in the downtown, we will help to maintain open space elsewhere."

Main Street New Jersey, a DCA program, provides business communities with the skills and knowledge to manage their own business districts. Their mission is to improve local economies, as well as improve the appearance and image of traditional downtowns, through the organization of business people, local citizens and resources.

"The redevelopment and preservation of our downtowns is a cornerstone of our efforts to grow smart across the state," Commissioner Levin said. "Partnerships are the key to a successful revitalization program. Through this unique partnership with the Highlands Council, we can teach local redevelopment officials how to create thriving downtown centers for residential and business activity, while preserving the historic and environmental character of these Highlands communities."

The first seminar, entitled *People, Money & Partnerships*, is scheduled for January 24 and 25 at Thomas Edison State College in Trenton. All sessions begin with registration from 8 a.m. to 9 a.m., and take place from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Continental breakfast and lunch are served at all sessions. For further information on this program, please go to http://www.state.nj.us/dca/dcr/msnj/msnj_dri.shtml.

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